



Rural District of Bridgwater



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31st DECEMBER, 1970

BRIDGWATER RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE (DECEMBER 1970)

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DR. W. R. THROWER

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MR. G. HARRIS

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF 1970

Medical Officer of Health

R. H. WATSON, M.B. B.Ch., B.A.O., D.P.H.

Medical Officer in Department (Somerset C.C.)

A.M. ATKINSON, M.B., B.Ch., D. Obst. R.C.O.G. - (Commenced
3.8.70)

Chief Public Health Inspector:


F.A. MAILE, A.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I. - (Resigned 31.8.70)

D.E. COLDHAM, A.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I. - (Commenced 1.11.70)

Additional Public Health Inspectors:

D.J. EMM, M.A.P.H.I.

D.K. LANE, M.A.P.H.I., M.R.S.H.



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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR 1970

Health Department,
22 King Square,
BRIDGWATER,

Tel: Bridgwater 4147/8

August, 1971

To: The Chairman and Members of the
Bridgwater Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting to you the Annual Report on the health of the District and the work of the Public Health Department during the year 1970. The report is drawn up in accordance with Ministry of Health instructions and is set out in the manner of previous reports, so that comparison with former years can easily be made.

The health of the Rural District has been good during the year. Very few infectious diseases other than measles were notified and the vital statistics continue to be satisfactory, and to compare favourably with those for the country as a whole.

We were sorry that Mr. F. A. Maile retired at the end of August. He served the Council well for thirty years, during which time he built up a fund of detailed knowledge which was of inestimable value to the Health Department and to the Public Health Committee. We hope that he will enjoy a well earned retirement. Mr. D. E. Coldham joined us from Norfolk in November when he took up the post of Chief Public Health Inspector and we are already benefitting from the new working arrangements which he is introducing into the Department.

After eight months without medical help we were glad to welcome Dr. A. M. Atkinson as Medical Officer in Department. She has had considerable experience in general practice and is keenly interested in paediatric medicine, and she has already had a significant influence on the work of the Department.

I wish to take this opportunity of thanking the Members of the Council, and other Chief Officers, and the Staff of the Health Department, for the help and co-operation which I have received during the year.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

R. H. WATSON

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS

GENERAL STATISTICS

Area (acres)	85,000
Population (Census 1961)	21,985
Population (Registrar General's estimate 1970)	25,820
No. of inhabited houses on 31st December, 1970	8,750
Rateable value on 31st December, 1970	£696,638
Sum represented by 1d. rate on 31st December, 1970	£2,859 2s. 3d

Extracts from VITAL STATISTICS for the year 1970

<u>Live Births</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	200	202	402
Illegitimate	<u>13</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>28</u>
	<u>213</u>	<u>217</u>	<u>430</u>
Live Birth Rate per 1,000 population			16.65
Illegitimate live births per cent of total live births			6.51
Stillbirths			3
Stillbirth rate per 1,000 total live and still births			6.93
Total live and still births			433
Infant Deaths (deaths of infants under one year of age)			6
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births - total			13.95
Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 total live births)			13.95
Early Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live births)			11.63
Perinatal Mortality Rate (stillbirths and deaths under 1 week combined per 1,000 total live and still births)			18.48
Maternal Mortality (including abortion)			Nil
Maternal Mortality Rate per 1,000 live and still births			Nil
<u>Deaths</u>			
Total number of deaths			267
Death rate per 1,000 population			10.34

Births

After allowing for inward and outward transfers the Registrar General's figures show that there were 430 births (213 boys and 217 girls) in the Rural District during 1970 being 1 less than in 1969. Of these births 28 were illegitimate. This is 6.51% of the total live births, as compared with 6.03% in 1969.

The birth rate of any area is dependent upon the composition of its population. Obviously a population with a high proportion of persons of child bearing age will have more births per 1,000 of the population than an area with an unduly large number of people in the older age groups. To enable the birth rates of different areas to be compared, the Registrar General provides a comparability factor for each Local Authority area. This standardises the birth rate of each area and makes comparison valid. The birth rate for the Rural District adjusted in this manner is increased from 16.65 to 17.48 per 1,000 of the population. The birth rate for England and Wales was 16.00.

Birth rates for the Rural District and for England and Wales for the past five years were as follows:-

	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
Crude Birth Rate	18.34	17.06	18.61	16.78	16.65
Standardised Birth Rate	19.25	17.10	19.54	17.62	17.48
England and Wales	17.7	17.2	16.90	16.30	16.00

Deaths

The number of deaths registered in the Rural District during 1970 was 130. Of these 7 were deaths of non-residents and were transferred to the district in which the persons ordinarily resided. There were, on the other hand 144 deaths of Rural District residents registered outside the District, (76 at Taunton hospitals and 68 elsewhere). The total corrected number of deaths assigned to the District was 267 (132 males and 135 females). This was 30 less than the previous year and gave a crude death rate of 10.34 per 1,000 of the population.

The crude death rate cannot be used to compare the mortality with that of other districts, as the populations of all areas are not similarly constituted as regards age and sex distribution. The Registrar General therefore supplies a comparability factor and the crude death rate multiplied by this figure can then be compared with that for the country as a whole or for any other local area similarly adjusted. The standardised death rate so obtained was 10.24 per 1,000 of the population, and this is compared with 11.7 for England and Wales.

Death rates for the District and for England and Wales for the past five years were as follows:-

	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
Crude Death Rate	9.84	9.36	10.82	11.57	10.34
Standardised Death Rate	9.64	9.17	10.71	11.34	10.24
England and Wales	11.7	11.2	11.9	11.9	11.70

Of 267 deaths, 194 occurred in people over the age of 65 years. 62 occurred in people in the productive age groups 15 to 64 years, and the following table gives the details of deaths in this age group:

	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Total
Malignant neoplasm, stomach.	-	-	-	1	1	2
Malignant neoplasm, intestine.	-	-	-	-	7	7
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus.	-	-	-	1	4	5
Malignant neoplasm, breast.	-	1	-	-	1	2
Malignant neoplasm, uterus.	-	-	-	1	1	2
Malignant neoplasm, prostate.	-	-	-	-	2	2
Other malignant neoplasms.	-	-	-	1	4	5
Anaemias.	-	-	-	-	1	1
Hypertensive disease.	-	-	-	1	-	1
Ischaemic heart disease.	-	-	-	3	6	9
Other forms of heart disease.	-	-	1	-	-	1
Cerebrovascular disease.	1	-	-	2	5	8
Pneumonia.	-	-	-	1	1	2
Asthma.	-	-	1	-	-	1
Cirrhosis of liver.	-	-	1	-	-	1
Nephritis and nephrosis.	1	-	-	-	-	1
Multiple Sclerosis.	-	-	-	-	1	1
Other diseases of nervous system.	-	-	-	-	1	1
Other diseases of circulatory system.	-	-	-	-	1	1
Other diseases of digestive system.	-	-	-	1	2	3

	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Total
Motor vehicle accidents.	-	1	-	2	-	3
All other accidents.	-	-	-	-	1	1
All other external causes.	-	-	-	-	2	2
Totals	2	2	3	14	41	62

Cancer Mortality

The number of deaths from cancer was 60 (males 33 and females 27). They constitute 22.47% of the total deaths during the year.

The following table shows the localisation of the disease in the 60 cases:-

Location	Number of Deaths			
	Male	Female	Total 1970	1969
Oesophagus.	1	2	3	-
Stomach.	4	2	6	7
Intestine.	6	8	14	8
Larynx.	-	-	-	2
Lung, Bronchus.	16	-	16	6
Breast.	-	4	4	4
Uterus.	-	2	2	3
Prostate.	5	-	5	1
Leukaemia.	1	-	1	1
Other and unspecified organs.	-	9	9	15
Total	33	27	60	47

Cancer of the Uterus

In previous reports reference was made to the need to introduce a scheme to provide for the examination of route tests (cervical smears) with a view to preventing cancer of the womb. Facilities for examination of the smears are now available and the County Council have provided a service whereby the tests are taken by family doctors and are examined at Musgrove Park Hospital.

Cancer of the Lungs

The ages at which death occurred in the last five years combined is detailed in the following table:-

Year	Under 15	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Over 65	Total
1966					1	1	6	8
1967					1	3	7	11
1968				1	-	3	10	14
1969				-	1	1	4	6
1970				-	1	4	11	16
				1	4	12	38	55

Infantile Mortality

6 infants under one year of age died during the year. This gives an infant mortality rate of 13.95 per 1,000 of all live births, while the corresponding rate for England and Wales was 18.0.

Deaths from Heart Disease

Of the 267 deaths, heart disease caused roughly 1 in every 3 (males 37, females 37). It represented 27.72% of the total deaths from all causes and was equivalent to a death rate of 2.87 per 1,000 of the population.

Other Deaths

Road accidents accounted for 4 deaths.

"Cause of Death (all ages)"	M	F	TOTAL
All Causes	132	135	267
Other infective and parasitic diseases	-	1	1
Malignant neoplasm, oesophagus	1	2	3
Malignant neoplasm, stomach	4	2	6
Malignant neoplasm, intestine	6	8	14
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	16	-	16
Malignant neoplasm, breast	-	4	4
Malignant neoplasm, uterus	-	2	2
Malignant neoplasm, prostate	5	-	5
Leukaemia	1	-	1
Other malignant neoplasms	-	9	9
Diabetes Mellitus	1	2	3
Anaemias	1	-	1
Chronic rheumatic heart disease	1	2	3
Hypertensive disease	5	5	10
Ischaemic heart disease	23	20	43
Other forms of heart disease	8	10	18
Cerebrovascular disease	20	21	41
Influenza	3	1	4
Pneumonia	9	10	19
Bronchitis and emphysema	7	2	9
Asthma	-	2	2
Peptic ulcer	-	1	1
Cirrhosis of liver	1	-	1
Nephritis and nephrosis	2	-	2
Hyperplasia of prostate	1	-	1
Congenital anomalies	1	2	3
Birth injury, difficult labour, etc.,	-	1	1
Other causes of perinatal mortality	-	1	1
Symptoms and ill defined conditions	1	-	1
Multiple Sclerosis	-	1	1
Other diseases of nervous system	1	3	4
Other diseases of circulatory system	5	10	15
Other diseases of respiratory system	1	1	2
Other diseases of digestive system	2	5	7
Other diseases genito-urinary system	-	2	2
Diseases of musculo-skeletal system	-	1	1
Motor vehicle accidents	3	1	4
All other accidents	3	1	4
All other external causes	-	2	2

Population

The Registrar General's estimate of the population of the Rural District as at June 1970 was 25,820 which indicates an increase of 140 on the previous year. The natural increase in the population that is, the excess of births over deaths, was 163.

Year	Estimated Population	Increase	Natural Increase
1961 (Census)	21,950	1,450	151
1962	22,500	550	158
1963	23,040	540	168
1964	23,770	730	199
1965	24,200	430	204
1966	24,590	390	209
1967	24,900	310	191
1968	25,410	510	198
1969	25,680	270	134
1970	25,820	140	163

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

The following table sets out the cases of notifiable infectious diseases which were notified in the Rural District during 1970. The table is drawn up after making the necessary amendments to the original notifications by either the practitioners or the Medical Officer at the Isolation Hospital.

Disease	Cases notified	
	1970	1969
Acute Meningitis	2	-
Scarlet Fever	-	-
Whooping Cough	6	4
Measles	198	74
Rubella	1	1
Infective Jaundice	12	8
Malaria	1	-
Food Poisoning	-	3
Tuberculosis	3	2
Paratyphoid	1	-
Total	224	92

Measles

198 cases were notified during the year. Immunisation against measles is now part of the County Council immunisation computer programme and it is hoped that a satisfactory proportion of susceptible children will be protected and that the epidemics which at one time occurred regularly every other year will be a thing of the past.

Acute Poliomyelitis (Infantile Paralysis)

No cases were notified.

Tuberculosis

3 new cases of tuberculosis were notified during the year.

The very low incidence of deaths due to tuberculosis was maintained and reflects the efficacy of modern treatment. All new cases are thoroughly investigated and all known close contacts are invited to attend the Chest Clinic for investigation.

B.C.G. Vaccination

In order to raise the immunity of school leavers to tuberculosis, vaccination with B.C.G. vaccine was offered to 737 children between the ages of 13 and 14 years attending schools in the Mid-Somerset Divisional Area. 725 received the preliminary skin or Heaf Test, to determine whether they had in fact already experienced some infection with tuberculosis. Of these 658 were negative and were vaccinated with B.C.G. vaccine.

Food Poisoning

No cases of Food Poisoning were notified.

Immunisation and Vaccination

Immunisation and vaccination against diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, poliomyelitis, smallpox and measles are now entirely carried out by general practitioners under the County Council scheme utilising a computer to deal with the administrative aspects. This scheme is working satisfactorily and it will certainly result in raising still further the general level of immunisation of the community.

German Measles (Rubella)

This disease is important because if an expectant mother is infected during the first three months of pregnancy the baby may be affected by severe congenital abnormalities. During the year the County Council introduced a scheme offering vaccination against Rubella to girls aged 11-13 inclusive. The response was disappointing and it is now intended to introduce this worthwhile measure into the computer programme.

Laboratory Facilities

Pathological specimens are sent to the Laboratory at Musgrove Park Hospital, which forms part of the Public Health Laboratory Service. Results of investigations are available with the minimum of delay and there is good liaison between the laboratory personnel and the field workers in the Public Health Department.

Examinations carried out during the year included:-

Water Samples	40
Ice Cream Samples	16
Other foods	44

Hospitals

Hospitals in the area are administered by the South Western Regional Hospital Board through the West Somerset Hospital Management Committee.

The hospitals are:-

	46
Bridgwater General Hospital	38 beds
Mary Stanley Nursing Home	25 beds
Northgate Hospital	60 beds

Cases of infectious diseases needing treatment, or isolation, are admitted to Taunton Isolation Hospital.

The new Outpatients Department at Bridgwater Hospital has been completed and is proving very satisfactory. The South Western Regional Hospital Board are at present proceeding with their plans to adapt Bridgwater General Hospital to cater for short stay surgical cases. This will involve a reduction in the number of beds available at the hospital, but with improved facilities and an up graded operating theatre the hospital will be capable of playing a significant part in reducing the large waiting list of patients in the Mid-Somerset clinical area who have been waiting in some cases for years for surgical treatment of a relatively minor nature. Cases to be admitted will of course be carefully selected. Most patients will be discharged to the care of their family doctors and practice nurses after 48 hours. Clearly it is envisaged that intensive use will be made of the hospital and its future for the foreseeable future seems assured.

The proposed District General Hospital at Lyngford has now got a definite place in the Hospital Board's building programme and active planning has already begun.

The Special Clinic, for the investigation and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases is now held at the Bridgwater General Hospital. Cases attending the clinic for the first time during 1970 were as follows:-

Syphilis	3
Gonorrhoea	22
Other conditions requiring treatment	30
Other conditions not requiring treatment	14

Health Centre

With the transfer of the Chest and Special Clinics from the Mount Street Health Centre to Bridgwater General Hospital room is now available at the Health Centre for office accommodation. Plans have been prepared and it is anticipated that the Area Health Office will be transferred from King Square to the Health Centre during the present financial year.

Ante-Natal Clinics

No Local Authority Ante-Natal Clinics are held in the area, supervision being conducted by General Practitioners and Midwives.

Infant Welfare

Infant Welfare Clinics, for which the County Council are responsible, are held at Ashcott, Cannington, East Huntspill, Edington, Nether Stowey, North Petherton, Pawlett, Puriton, Spaxton, West Huntspill, Westonzoyland, and Woolavington.

National Assistance Act, 1948 - Section 47

A number of cases were assisted through informal action, and in no case was it necessary for the Council to take statutory action to secure admission of an old person to suitable accommodation.

Home Help Service

This service is provided by the County Council, with local administration by the Home Help Organiser, with an office at the Health Centre, Mount Street, Bridgwater.

The Home Helps have provided a very valuable service and much assistance was given to needy cases. During the year 197 cases received assistance.

These included the following types:-

Maternity	11
Old age and infirmity	154
Chronic sick	17
Post & Pre-natal	1
Post operation	1
Emergency illness	2
Other cases	11

The number of Home Helps at 31st December, 1970, was as follows:-

Full time	2
Part time	32

Welfare of Old People

The Rural District Council assist the W.V.S. in providing Meals on Wheels for old people, and this worthwhile service is greatly appreciated by the recipients. An average of 75 meals per week are distributed.

Mr. and Mrs. Day Nursery

This nursery, administered by the County Council, is available for children aged 6 months to 5 years. A list of priorities has been drawn up by the Council and a local Admission Committee decides which children should be admitted. Admission is granted mainly on grounds of economic difficulty or unsatisfactory housing conditions. Accommodation is available for 25 children. The average daily attendance during 1970 was 24 children.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal

The North Petherton scheme providing for the provision of an efficient sewage treatment works has been completed. Work has commenced on the scheme for resewering the village of Nether Stowey and the provision of a treatment works at an estimated cost of £175,000.

The feasibility study undertaken by the Councils' consulting engineers has shown that there would be an advantage in constructing two trunk sewers to serve villages situated north and south of the Polden Hills and to take sewage to the river Parrett, where again there would be advantage in joining with the Borough of Bridgwater and the Urban District of Burnham-on-Sea in order that two large sewage treatment works could deal with the combined areas. Discussions with the neighbouring authorities are in progress.

A trunk sewerage scheme to sewer the villages on the southern side of the Polden Hills at an estimated cost of £300,000 and to discharge to Bridgwater Borough Council's proposed new treatment works is in course of preparation. It is also proposed that a similar trunk sewer will serve the villages on the northern side of the Polden Hills at an estimated cost of £245,000 and will discharge to a new treatment works situated at West Huntspill. The new treatment works will also serve the Urban District of Burnham-on-Sea and villages in Axbridge Rural District.

Water Supplies

Sampling of Water Supplies was continued and results generally were highly satisfactory. In those cases where results were not up to standard no special measures other than increasing chlorination were necessary.

Results of bacteriological tests generally can be summarised as follows:-

Supply	Number of Examinations	Report	
		Satisfactory	Not Satisfactory
Ashford	11	11	-
Willoughby	11	10	1
Over Stowey	10	10	-
Clatworthy	3	3	-

Chemical analysis of Willoughby, Over Stowey, and Ashford supplies were continued as a matter of routine. Reports were as follows:-

Willoughby Water Supply

	<u>Parts per million</u>
Physical Characters	Clear and bright. Hazen Units less than 5.
Sediment	Nil
Reaction	Slightly Alkaline
pH	7.6
Total Solids	200.0
Total Alkalinity (as CaCO ₃)	115.0
Carbonate Hardness " "	115.0
Non-carbonate " " "	40.0
Total Hardness " "	155.0
Chloride (as Cl)	17.0
Ammoniacal Nitrogen (as N)	0.004
Albuminoid " "	0.008
Nitrate " "	2.0
Nitrite " "	Nil
Oxygen absorbed from Permanganate in 4 hours at 27° C.	Nil
Free Carbon Dioxide	4.0
Iron	Nil
Copper, Lead and Zinc.	Nil

This is a moderately hard water, of satisfactory chemical purity.

Over Stowey Water Supply

	<u>Parts per million</u>
Physical Characters	Clear and bright. Hazen Units less than 5.
Sediment	Nil
Reaction	Very slightly Alkaline
pH	7.3
Total Solids	65.0
Total Alkalinity (as CaCO ₃)	40.0
Carbonate Hardness " "	
Non-carbonate " " "	
Total Hardness " "	40.0
Chloride (as Cl)	12.0
Ammoniacal Nitrogen (as N)	Nil
Albuminoid " "	0.012
Nitrate " "	0.6
Nitrite " "	Nil
Oxygen absorbed from Permanganate in 4 hours at 27° C.	0.15
Free Carbon Dioxide	2.0
Iron, Copper, Lead and Zinc.	Nil

This is a soft water of satisfactory chemical purity.

Ashford Water Supply

	<u>Parts per million</u>
Physical Characters	Clear and bright. Hazen Units less than 5.
Sediment	Nil
Reaction	Very slightly alkaline
pH	7.4
Total Solids	220.0
Total Alkalinity (as CaCO ₃)	130.0
Carbonate Hardness " "	130.0
Non-carbonate " "	40.0
Total Hardness " "	170.0
Chloride (as Cl)	16.0
Ammoniacal Nitrogen (as N)	Nil
Albuminoid " "	0.028
Nitrate " "	1.0
Nitrite " "	Nil
Oxygen absorbed from Permanganate in 4 hours at 27° C.	0.35
Free Carbon Dioxide	7.0
Iron, Copper, Lead and Zinc.	Nil

This is a moderately hard water of satisfactory chemical purity.

Housing

The number of post-war houses built in the Rural District up to 31st December, 1970, was as follows:-

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| (a) Erected by Local Authority | 1,313 |
| (b) Erected by Private Enterprise | 2,932 |

During 1970 the Council built 50 houses and 169 were provided by private firms. These figures compare with Nil and 126 respectively in the previous year.

At the end of the year there were approximately 530 applications for Council houses as compared with 479 in the previous year.

Wardens Schemes for old people are now operating most successfully in the following villages: West Huntspill 15 (units) North Petherton 45, Woolavington 24, Nether Stowey 12, Puriton 8, Ashcott 8, and Cannington 26.

Improvement Grants

Owners of many properties have been informed of the benefits of these grants and have been urged to bring their properties up to modern standards.

The following table summaries the action taken:-

Discretionary Grants

Received		Approved	
Applications	No. of Dwellings	Applications	No. of Dwellings
48	48	48	52

Standard Grants

Received	Approved
15	15

Sanitary Inspection of the Area

The records given in the Chief Public Health Inspector's Report show the number of insanitary conditions dealt with.

FOR 1970

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my Annual Report for the year ended 31st. December, 1970.

STAFF

The staff of the Department consists of Chief Public Health Inspector, two Additional Public Health Inspectors and female clerk-typist.

COMPLAINTS

The number of complaints investigated during the year was 77. In most cases instances were abated as a result of informal action and it was only found necessary to serve 2 Statutory Notices. On inspection a number of complaints were found to be not justified and no further action was taken in regard to them.

Intensive methods of farming still give rise to the far greater number of complaints received, particularly methods of disposal. The operators of such undertakings do not appreciate the enormity of the problem and when one contemplates that 1,000 head of laying birds produces 4.5 tons of manure a year and the standard capacity of each unit is approximately 30,000 birds one begins to appreciate the problems that arise. High stocking methods are here to stay and every effort must be made to ensure that 'units' are so sited and constructed as to cause as little offence as possible.

The public is becoming more conscious of its role in bringing complaints to the Public Health Department, the fear of being branded an informer is going, and as a result it is possible to take positive action before conditions get to extremes. Although putting more pressure on the Inspectors, this new attitude to protecting the environment is welcomed and should be actively encouraged.

The second major cause of complaints is the fouling of ditches and watercourses with drainage effluent. The high water-table in parts of the district and the overloading of existing disposal facilities being the primary factors. The Council is to be congratulated on its policy towards providing mains sewerage to all villages as soon as resources permit and the installation of the system to provide joint sewerage and sewage disposal to all the Northern parishes will play a major part in the general improvement to the local environment.

WATER SUPPLY

Samples of water for bacteriological examination are taken at monthly intervals from the three sources serving most of the District and are forwarded to the Public Health Laboratory, Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton for examination.

A total of 62 visits was made in connection with water supply during the year.

The water supplies to the District are generally wholesome and adequate but there are a few isolated pockets where it is not possible either technically or economically to provide a mains supply but the occupiers are offered any advice and assistance the Department can give to safeguard and improve their supplies.

HAUSING

The total number of visits under the Housing Acts was 496, the number of separate houses inspected being 404.

Informal notices to owners to carry out repairs and the resulting follow-up visits to ensure compliance, forms the bulk of work under this heading. The cost of repairs continues to soar at approximately 8% per year and with the low rents and depreciating value of currency one can only sympathise with owners of property with "controlled" rents. It is hoped that the proposed "new deal" in housing rents will not be long swatted because unless owners are allowed a reasonable rent the number of houses falling into the category of "not repairable at reasonable cost" will continue to grow and Local Authorities will be called upon to provide more and more accommodation to let.

The number of applications for improvement grants continues to increase with the emphasis on discretionary rather than standard grants. This is an encouraging sign; it not only shows that occupiers are readily appreciating the benefits of good housing standards but it relieves pressure on the Local Authority's new housing commitments and keeps going the nations housing stocks which form such a major part of its assets.

139 visits were made in connection with Improvement Grants.

During the year 25 houses were repaired and improved as a result of the service of informal notices.

8 houses were represented as unfit for human habitation, and incapable of being rendered fit at reasonable cost and 3 Demolition Orders and 1 Closing Order were made by the Council. In 4 cases the Council agreed to accept an undertaking to carry out works within a stipulated time. 1 house subject to Demolition Order was demolished during the year and 2 houses were reconditioned.

3 families were transferred during the year from condemned houses into Council houses.

15 visits were made to houses in respect to which grants had been made under the Housing (Financial Provisions) Act.

OVERCROWDING

No new cases of overcrowding were discovered during the year.

The following particulars indicate the action taken under Part 1 of the Factories Act, 1961:-

	Number on Register	Insp	Number of written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
Factories in which Sections 4, 2, 3, 4, and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authority	-	-	-	-
Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	65	77	-	-
Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers premises).	2	2	-	-
TOTAL	67	79	-	-

	No. of cases in which defects were found				No. of cases in which prosecutions were instituted.
	Found	Remedied	Referred to H.M. Insp.	by H.M. Insp.	
Want of cleanliness					
Overcrowding (S.2)					
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)					
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)					
Ineffective drainage to floor (S.6)					
Sanitary conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient					
(b) Unsuitable or defective	5	10			
(c) Not separate for sexes					
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork).					
TOTAL	5	10			

OFFICES, SHOPS AND RAILWAY PREMISES

95 visits were made under the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act, 1963. All of the 82 registered premises received a general inspection. Six registrations were cancelled by reason of changed circumstances and 7 new premises were registered.

The number of persons employed in registered premises was 387 comprising 214 males and 173 females.

The standard of conditions in most premises is good and deficiencies noted were all of a minor nature. The main difficulties encountered are such items as the obstruction of staircases and passages with packing cases, the failure to renew broken light fittings, failure to repair worn floors - all items which only constant vigilance can overcome.

BAKEHOUSES

12 visits were made to the 7 bakehouses in the District and where defects or unsatisfactory conditions were found informal notices were served.

FOOD HYGIENE

As in previous years a considerable amount of time has been spent on the inspection of premises under the Food Hygiene Regulations and 334 inspections have been made of the 312 premises in the District.

Regular routine inspection and a gradual resulting improved standard is the rule still. Shop keepers are not generally reluctant to carry out improvements but pressures brought by the modern housewife who require better standards, quick service and keener prices is a considerable influence. Again it is encouraging to record that the general public is becoming more aware of its role in reporting unclean practices and food suspected as being unfit.

Generally any hygiene deficiencies were of a minor nature, but difficulty was experienced with standards in some catering establishments. The sudden unexpected pressure on cafes by the arrival of large numbers of holidaymakers puts so much pressure on the staff that standards inevitably drop. It is difficult to provide a solution to such a problem, but it is one which must be given more attention as the nation's holiday and leisure times increase the necessity for proper hygienic standards becomes more apparent.

Where contraventions of the Regulations were found, informal action was taken which resulted in 23 deficiencies being remedied, most of which were of a minor nature. In addition, the following improvements in facilities and equipment were installed:-

Refrigerators and Deep Freeze Cabinets	9
Additional hot water facilities	3
New Micro-wave cooker	1

The number and types of food premises in the District are as follows:-

	Fitted to comply with Regulation 16.	Regulation 19 applies.	Fitted to comply with Regulation 19
97 Food shops	97	97	97
68 Licenced premises & clubs	68	68	68
70 Food Preparing premises	66	70	70
39 Schools	36	39	39
15 Butchers	15	15	15
18 Cafes	18	18	18
7 Bakehouses	7	7	7
2 Poultry Packers	2	2	2
1 Fish & Chip Shop	1	1	1

N.B. Regulation 16 requires the provision of a wash-hand basin and Regulation 19 requires the provision of sink and other facilities for washing food and equipment.

MOBILE FOOD VEHICLES

20 inspections were made under the Food Hygiene (Markets, Stalls and Delivery Vehicles) Regulations, 1966. These vehicles include mobile grocery shops and vehicles selling meat, ice cream, wet fish and fried fish and chips.

Mobile 'shops' cause considerable administrative difficulties for the Department because of the mere nature of their trading methods. The mobile grocery and butchery shops provide no real problem, their rounds follow a similar pattern week after week and their times vary little but ice-cream and fish and chips vendors who ply their trade more at week-ends and evenings prove very elusive.

Lack of hot water for hand and equipment washing again was the main fault on these vehicles, this is not because of any technical difficulties but rank bad management. The importance of this is being constantly stressed to the vehicle operators because their trade is a food for immediate consumption.

SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL KITCHENS

30 inspections were made of schools and school kitchens. It was found necessary to re-visit two kitchens.

Redecoration and repairs were carried out at 10 schools. In addition, alterations and improvements to sanitary accommodation took place at 5 schools.

LICENCED PREMISES

66 inspections of licenced premises were carried out, and a number of improvements were brought about by informal action.

MEAT AND FOODS

There are four licensed slaughterhouses in the District, two of which are used exclusively for the wholesale trade, and the others are used for both wholesale and retail purposes.

The number of animals slaughtered increased by 18% of the previous years total and indications are that a similar or greater increase can be expected in future years. Generally, the slaughterhouses are well maintained and operated, but in a type of business where standards can so easily fall away it is necessary to give constant reminders but informal action is usually all that is necessary to bring about any desirable improvement.

603 visits were made in connection with the inspection of meat and 9,788 carcasses were inspected, an increase of 1,751 on the previous year, and giving an average of 16 animals per visit. The numbers of the different kinds of animals inspected were as follows:-

Beasts	915
Cows	85
Calves	3,448
Sheep	4,495
Pigs	845

/Approximately 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ tons

MEAT AND FOODS (continued)

Approximately 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ tons of meat was condemned during the year, details of which are as follows:-

Beasts

Heads and tongues	4
Livers	160
Lungs	12
Kidneys	1
Heart and lungs	1
Skirt	1
Spleens	5
Beef	472 lbs

Cows

Carcases and organs	5
Heads and tongues	1
Livers	41
Liver and spleen	1
Kidneys	3
Liver and lungs	5
Hearts	1
Skirt	2
Beef	1,257 lbs

Calves

Carcases and Organs	37
Livers	5
Kidneys	12
Plucks	4
Lungs	17
Hearts	7
Heart, lungs	1
Veal	125 lbs.

Sheep

Carcases and organs	18
Livers	94
Lungs	5
Hearts	2
Plucks	4
Kidneys	1
Mutton	43 lbs

Pigs

Carcases and organs	11
Heads and tongues	10
Livers	46
Kidneys	1
Lungs	57
Heart, lungs	5
Plucks	14
Pork	98 lbs

Other Foods

30 bovine hearts
10 lbs. Ice Cream Wafers

MEAT AND FOODS (continued)

Carcases and offal inspected and condemned in whole or part during the year:-

	Cattle excl. Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number Inspected	915	85	3,448	4,495	845	-
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticercosis</u> - whole carcases condemned	-	5	37	18	11	-
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	205	70	54	110	131	-
% of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis and Cysticerci	22.40	88.23	2.64	2.85	16.80	-
<u>Tuberculosis only -</u> Whole carcase condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-	7	-
% of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	-	-	-	-	0.82	-
<u>Cysticercosis</u> Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases submitted to treat- ment by refrigeration	-	-	-	-	-	-
Generalized and totally condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-

Condemed meat is normally disposed of to manufacturers of animal feeding stuffs and fertilisers where it is processed and sterilised by steam under pressure.

KNACKERS YARDS

There is one licenced Knackers Yard in the District but this has very limited use and there was no cause for action during the year.

PROCESSED FOODS

There are 13 premises registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955 for the manufacture of sausages, or potted, pressed, pickled and preserved foods.

This type of premises calls for extra vigilance because of the nature of the product and its manufacture but there were no contraventions reported.

MILK AND DAIRIES

The number of retail purveyors of milk on the register is 9 and 8 visits were made for the inspection of dairies during the year. There are also 3 dairies manufacturing milk products on a large scale.

ICE CREAM

The number of premises registered for the storage and sale of ice cream at the end of the year was 103. No premises were registered for the manufacture of ice cream.

16 samples were taken during the year - all were placed in Provisional Grade 1.

A total of 103 visits were made in connection with the manufacture, storage and sale of ice cream.

POULTRY PACKING STATION

The poultry packing station at Nether Stowey is being operated satisfactorily and 71 visits were made to it during the year. The number of birds processed was 2,300,837; most of these were broilers, but a few capons were also dealt with.

Approximately 1% of birds were rejected as unfit for human consumption, the weight of poultry condemned being about 32 tons.

The premises are inspected regularly and no serious contraventions were noted. The management and your Inspectors have a harmonious working relationship resulting in a continually improving product. The main difficulty experienced is that the sheer weight of numbers of birds passing through makes it virtually impossible for every bird to be inspected. A "spotter" system is in operation, this seems to work satisfactorily and results in a considerable number of birds being rejected. The solution to 100% inspection would be to employ a full-time inspector, this, of course would be a considerable expense but if current Government attitudes persist it may well be that legislation to this effect may well soon be on the statute book.

The problem of effluent disposal from the Nether Stowey Packing Station still gives cause for concern but this should be resolved in early 1972, the Council agreeing to accept the effluent into the new sewage works now under construction.

WASTE FOOD BOILING PLANTS

There are now 5 licensed waste food boiling plants in the District, to which 27 visits were made during the year.

Two difficulties arise under this heading, firstly as most plant operators are only "part-time", operating at evenings and weekends, checking plant efficiency is often difficult and secondly the monetary value of the waste being small there is a tendency for operators to suddenly cease trading, the supplier finds another operator, often without any reference to the Local Authority, and we again have to go through the complete procedure of plant building and operating.

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS

123 visits were made during the year in connection with moveable dwellings.

There are 17 caravan and camping sites in the District, all of which are small. In addition, there are 24 caravans on individual sites, in total this indicates a total of 201 caravans and 29 holiday 'chalets'.

The inevitable complaints regarding gypsies and seasonal workers were received but apart from one or two isolated incidences no real difficulty was experienced. Many complaints are laid at the gypsies' door but generally they are co-operative if properly approached; their natural suspicion of Local Authority officials can be attributed to previous untactful approaches. The Caravans Act, 1968 has undoubtedly filled one gap in providing permanent sites for gypsies but there is still a pressing need for proper sites for seasonal workers.

The Councils gypsy site at Westonzoyland is operating most satisfactorily and could well serve as a model for other Authorities considering such sites. If all Local Authorities took such prompt and precise action the so-called "gypsy problem" would soon resolve itself.

ANIMAL BOARDING ESTABLISHMENTS

Seven licences have been issued to proprietors of Animal Boarding Establishments.

No particular contraventions were recorded although there was some difficulty regarding one establishment. This arose as a direct result of that section of the Act which calls for premises to be licenced only if boarding animals is the major part of the enterprise.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

35 visits were made in connection with infectious diseases.

PEST CONTROL

The control of rats and mice continued to keep the Councils Rodent Operator fully occupied and with the impending curtailment of pest control by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, his services will be called upon more often.

All the Councils sewerage systems were test baited, and apart from small incidences at three of the eighteen treated, were free of infestation.

Apart from rodent control, the Councils services for treatment of other types of pest infestation such as flies, wasps, cockroaches etc, came under increasing pressure, there seeming to be a general reluctance by the public to carry out such treatment themselves.

SUMMARY OF VISITS

Water Supply	62
Drainage	109
New Work	4
Nuisances	261
Refuse Disposal	19
Offices, Shops & Railway Premises Act	95
Factories	63
Schools	30
Housing (Slum Clearance)	89
Housing Repairs	233
Improvement Grants	139
Housing (Financial Provisions)	15
Overcrowding	6
Miscellaneous Housing Visits	20
Moveable Dwellings	123
Infectious Diseases	35
Filthy and Verminous Premises	3
Rodent Infestation	26
Other Pest Control	106
Meat and Food Inspection	603
Food Shops	141
Mobile Shops	26
Bakehouses	12
School Kitchens	30
Other Food Preparing Premises	65
Licensed Premises and Clubs	66
Dairies	8
Ice Cream	103
Ice Cream Sample Visits	16
Poultry Sample Visits	16
Poultry Packers	75
Slaughterhouses	17
Knacker Yard	2
Waste Food Plants	27
Animal Boarding Establishments	12
Miscellaneous Visits	147
Hairdressers	6
Public Sanitary Accommodation	94
Fire Precautions	12
Food Poisoning	3
Outworkers	16

2,935

I am, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,

D. E. Coldham

Chief Public Health Inspector

